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VILLAGE ECONOMY AND FARM LIVELIHOOD
FOLLOWING NORTHEAST LAND REFORM

Chiang Tsu-shou

Redistribution of land was started in the Northeast in 1947 and was completed in 1948. As the result of land reform, remarkable progress has been made in 1950 agricultural production and farm livelihood has been constantly improving.

Production Expands

Following World War II, all Japanese living in the Northeast were repatriated. The land they left temporarily lay fallow. Consequently, the area of arable land and the productive volume were much lower than under the puppet regime. Since 1947, the government has encouraged farmers in the exploitation of land. At the end of 1949, 2,130,000 hectares of land had been reclaimed. It is planned that in 1950, 470,000 hectares will be newly exploited, and the whole area of arable land including Inner Mongolia will be expanded to 17,277,700 hectares. This number approximates the 1943 puppet record of 19,672,728 hectares.

Some 610,000 hectares, excluding Inner Mongolia, have already been exploited during spring and summer 1950. Included in the 610,000 hectares are the following areas of land newly opened in the various Northeast provinces:

Land Newly Opened

Province	No of Mou	Total Arable Land
Sungkiang	1,410,714	4.5
Heilungkiang	1,527,200	3.9
Jehol	848,000	6.0
Liaosi	634,350	--
Kirin	675,000	--

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At present, the total arable land in the Northeast is 155,300,000 mou. Grain yield has been augmented gradually. In 1948, the total production of all grains in the Northeast was 11,800,000 tons. In 1949, the volume was raised to 14,140,000 tons. The 1950 production may reach 18 million tons. In 1947, the average yield per hectare was 1,500 catties. The 1948 yield per hectare was increased to 1,920 catties. The 1950 yield per hectare, in the Northeast and in Inner Mongolia, is expected to reach 2,224 catties.

In Kirin, Sungkiang, and other provinces, an abundant harvest has already been collected. The crops in the southern part of Liaotung and Liaosi are even better. In the Northeast as a whole, 90 percent of all crops have been harvested. If commercial grains and crops used as industrial raw materials are also taken into consideration, the average yields are even higher. The area planted in wheat was raised to 600,000 hectares in 1949, surpassing the puppet record of 500,000 hectares, and the area planted in cotton, which was 120,000 hectares in 1949, has been increased to 258,000 hectares in 1950, surpassing the highest puppet record of 255,000 hectares.

Class Composition Changes

Before the implementation of land reform, landlords and rich farmers, who represented only 10 percent of the Northeast population, had 80 percent of the land while the poor farmers, tenants, and the middle-class farmers, who represented more than 80 percent of the population, had only 20 percent of the land. After the redistribution of land, the surplus of land, implements, and livestock which formerly belonged to landlords and rich farmers was confiscated without compensation and distributed to poor farmers and tenants on the basis of population and equal acreage. To survey the living standard of Northeast farmers following the implementation of land reform, the people's government has conducted some investigations concerning the qualitative and quantitative changes of villages. The results were as follows:

According to incomplete data on Heilungkiang and Sungkiang, poor farmers and tenants have more than 400,000 horses and oxen and 50 million mou of land. Farmers living in Ho-chiang Ch'iu have lands ranging from 7 to 12 mou. More than 50 percent of those who were poor farmers and tenants at the time of the redistribution have since become middle-class farmers.

Landlords have been completely eliminated, the number of tenants and poor farmers has been gradually reduced, and the number of middle-class farmers has been greatly augmented.

People's Government Assists Farmers

The rapid development of agricultural production in Northeast is closely related to the assistance and encouragement which the government has given to the farmers. The Sungkiang Provincial Government lent 6,480 improved farm tools to the farmers in early summer 1950. The Jehol Provincial Government collected 460,000 catties of scrap iron, made farm tools from it, then distributed them to the farmers. In the districts with excellent production records, the labor power of mutual assistance teams represents 80 percent of the whole labor power. Under the principle of collective use of farm tools, much labor power and many implements may be saved.

According to incomplete data, 100,000 units of labor power have been saved in the Northeast during spring, summer, and autumn of 1950. Farmers have shifted their energy to industry, mining and odd jobs. The income from these sources in the first three quarters of 1950 has reached 1,252,000,000 Northeast yuan in Sungkiang Province alone. Recently, more than 20,000 laborers who formerly lived in Pingyuan Province, have been organized and sent to the Northeast to exploit virgin land. No tax will be levied on the laborers in the first year of exploitation. In the second year only a slight amount of tax will be collected.

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This practice is in complete conformity with the established standard. If the laborers are lazy and their production is below the norm, heavy taxes will be collected from them. When the laborers arrive in the Northeast, the government extends farm credit and distributes seeds to them. The total amount of farm credits extended to laborers in 1950 alone has reached 1,330,000,000,000 Northeast yuan.

The government has also devoted itself to the reform of "good-for-nothings," lazy men, and landlords in order that all able-bodied men may be organized into a production front. According to estimates made in the eastern part of the Sungkiang Province, 2,329 persons had been reformed in 1948 out of a total of 3,152 "good-for-nothings."

Specific measures have been taken by the government to prevent insects and frost from damaging crops. Because of serious frost damage during September 1950 in Liaosi and Liaotung, the people's government launched a movement to harvest crops at the proper time. The government has also extended farm credits, distributed insecticides and seeds, and taken care of sick animals. Twelve farms under government guidance feed and supply farm animals. Artificial insemination has also been adopted to produce hybrids and to improve the quality of animals. Some 27,000 animals have been selected for this purpose.

Farm credits have been granted under government direction to farmers living at 52 places where irrigation systems had been established. Dikes totaling 3,000 kilometers in length had been built before the flood period and 750,000 hectares of land were saved from damage.

As farm products are rapidly augmented and the farmer's income is increased, the purchasing power at the villages has been greatly raised. Following the implementation of land reform, farmers' livelihood has been improved. In his article "The First Year in Carrying Out the Joint Public and Private Economic Reconstruction Program in the Northeast," Kao Kang laid great stress upon the improvement of living in Min-chu Ts'un and Ko-shan Hsien, Sungkiang Province. On the basis of 1948 as the index, the purchasing power of the average family in Ko-shan Hsien reached 136 in 1949 and 263 in 1950.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Average Expenditures</u>		<u>Allocation</u>	
	<u>Per Family</u> (Northeast yuan)	<u>Per Individual</u> (Northeast yuan)	<u>Commodities</u> (%)	<u>Production Materials</u> (%)
Min-chu Ts'un				
1948	3,610,000	767,000	88.2	11.8
1949	4,910,000	1,147,000	89.3	10.7
1950	9,496,000	2,232,000	77.0	23.0
Ko-shan Hsien				
1950	14,282,000	3,378,000	66.3	33.7

A survey of Ch'ien-t'ou Ts'un, Hsiang-pai Ch'u, Wang-k'uei Hsien, Heilungkiang Province, shows that on the basis of the 1948 index of 100, the purchasing power of the average family reached 119 in 1949 and 153 in 1950.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Average Expenditures</u>		<u>Average Cloth Sales</u>
	<u>Per Family (NE yuan)</u>	<u>Per Individual (NE yuan)</u>	<u>Per Individual (ch'ih)</u>
1948	6,469,000	815,000	16.03
1949	7,756,000	978,000	21.70
1950	9,895,000	1,247,000	27.70

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A survey of Hsiao-tien-tzu Ts'un, Chi-an Hsien, Liaotung Province, near the Korean border, shows that on the basis of 1947 as the index figure, the total income reached 180 in 1948 and 230 in 1949 while total expenditures, on the same basis, reached 140 in 1948 and 250 in 1949.

Farmers have urgent need of cloth. Expenditures for cloth consume roughly half of the total farm income.

In P'o-li Hsien, A'ch'eng Hsien, Mu-lan Hsien, and Shuang-ch'eng Hsien, Sungkiang Province, the average farmer purchased 20 ch'ih of cloth in 1949. In Hsiu-shan Ch'u, Yu-shu Hsien, Kirin Province, the average purchase was 17 ch'ih. In Kuo-yu Ts'un, No-ho Hsien, Heilungkiang Province, the average purchase was more than 20 ch'ih. In T'ai-tzu-kou Ts'un, K'uan-tien Hsien, Liaotung Province, the average purchase was four times greater than it had been before the implementation of land reform.

The increase in buying power is also shown in purchases of farm tools, livestock, and other industrial articles.

Another development following the land reform is the increased building of new houses. There are more than 5,400 villages and towns in Liaotung Province. Since 1949, 80,000 buildings have been erected in Liaotung alone. In Shuang-ch'eng Ch'u, Sungkiang Province, more than 8,200 buildings have been erected. In Hei-lin-tzu Ch'u, Yu-shu Hsien, Kirin Province, more than 1,500 buildings were erected in the spring of 1950.

As farm products and byproducts increase following the implementation of land reform, the farmers in the Northeast have surplus produce to market and the demand for industrial goods is increased. To satisfy the farmers' demands, the General Merchandise Corporation has poured tremendous quantities of goods into the villages. Factories send commodities directly into the villages through the local cooperatives. The increased consumption of industrial goods in Northeast villages is reflected in the following data.

In Sungkiang Province, in the spring of 1950, the General Merchandise Corporation sold 213,000 pairs of rubber shoes, which equaled 80 percent of the total 1949 sales, and towels and socks representing 50 percent of the 1949 sales. The total value of commodities sold in the first half of 1950 reached 127.4 percent of the 1949 figure.

In Heilungkiang Province, the corporation sold 441,500 bolts of cloth and 1,900 tons of cotton, from June 1948 to May 1949, and 1,243,000 bolts of cloth and 1,800 tons of cotton from June 1949 to May 1950.

In Liaosi Province, farmers purchased 87,479 bolts of cloth from state-operated outlets between January and September 1950. During the same period, the General Merchandise Corporation sold 448,800 catties of sugar, 16,587 dozens of towels, and 85,529 pairs of rubber shoes. The corporation sold 17,341 bars of soap between April and August 1950.

In Liaotung Province, state-operated outlets sold 942,243 bolts of cloth, 52,938 tons of salt, 3,196 tons of soybean oil, and 181,853 tons of coal during the past year.

Appreciation Favors Farmers

The government has made adjustments to narrow the difference between the correlated value of farm products and industrial goods; the discrepancy was great after World War II. The equivalent value of one ton of grain in 1946 was 0.8 bolt of cloth; in 1947, 1.275 bolts; in 1948, 1.4 bolts; in 1949, 2.8 bolts; and, in the first half of 1950, more than 3 bolts.

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1947, in Kirin Province, one tou [10.35 liters] of soybeans could be exchanged for 6 catties of salt; in 1949, it could be exchanged for 33 catties of salt. In 1946, in the northern areas of the Northeast, one ton of soybeans had the equivalent value of 70 feet of coarse cloth or 100 catties of sea salt; in 1949, its value rose to 330 feet of coarse cloth or 1,000 catties of sea salt. The exchange rate has been constantly adjusted in favor of the farmers.

Rural Culture Advances

Cultural stations have been established at various places to raise the cultural level of farmers and laborers. There are now 659 cultural stations in the Northeast, excluding Jehol Province, where drought has been severe. The cultural station is composed of two offices. The central office is on the ch'u level and the branch office is on the ts'un level. The mission of the cultural station is to organize the farmers, to eliminate illiteracy, to promote sanitation, to disseminate and interpret current events, to study government policies and laws, to educate children, and to direct the cultural recreation of the farmers.

For the time being all activities center in the organization of farmers, the elimination of illiteracy, and the dissemination and interpretation of current events according to the outlines produced by the Northeast government.

The New China Book Store has sent small teams into the villages to distribute textbooks to farmers and their children. Farmers are allowed to get books on credit. The teams actively assist the farmers to organize small village libraries. Some 5,000 such libraries have been organized in the Northeast.

The organization of a village school does not necessarily conform to the regulations for urban schools. Village schools have been established according to local needs and circumstances. For example, in the calamity-stricken areas of Jehol Province, the schoolteachers are following several plans:

1. Half-day system. Classes are conducted only one-half day, after which the teachers and students go to the fields to farm.
2. Alternate-days system. Teachers and students work one day in the classrooms then farm the next day.
3. Itinerant system. Teachers go around to lecture to the students and farmers.

Northeast Future Bright

In Liaosì Province the farmers demand that the cotton acreage be enlarged from the present 120,000 hectares to 200,000 hectares in 1951. The Jehol Provincial Government is planning to enlarge the cotton acreage from the present 57,000 hectares to 68,000 hectares in 1951. The Agriculture and Forestry Office of the Liaotung People's Government met from 30 August to 4 September 1950, to raise production levels. The conference decided that the productive area should be enlarged and that the quality of grain and raw materials should be improved. For example, 22,000 hectares were originally planted in jute. In the proposed plan, jute acreage will be enlarged to 24,240 hectares.

The area for blue hemp [sic] is to be increased from 8,000 hectares to 9,635 hectares. Cotton production per hectare should be raised from 700 kilograms to 758.1 kilograms. Jute production per hectare should be raised from 465 kilograms to 697.6 kilograms. Groundnut production per hectare should be raised from 978 kilograms to 1,125.3 kilograms.

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In Sungkiang Province, soybean acreage should be further enlarged from the present 53,000 hectares to 450,000 hectares in 1951. Rice paddy should be increased from the present 1,500 hectares to 1,700 hectares.

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